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PRESS RELEASE

The Tennessee Higher Education Commission has called a meeting on June 7, 2004 to consider recommendations for changes in 2004-05 tuition and fees for public higher education institutions.

The Commission staff is recommending a seven percent increase in fees for universities and community colleges. Statewide, a seven percent tuition and fee increase will generate approximately \$41 million which is required to offset rising fixed costs, inflation, and mandated salary increases for faculty and staff.

According to Dr. Richard Rhoda, Executive Director of the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Tennessee remains a low-fee state when compared to other states in the region. The proposed fee adjustment will result in a \$221 to \$265 increase at Tennessee's four-year institutions, a \$128 increase at the two-year institutions and a \$94 increase at the technology centers, annually.

"We are sensitive to the fact that any increase in fees adds to the students' cost burden; however, this increase is moderate and absolutely necessary for the institutions to maintain quality and accessibility," Rhoda said.

The Commission's recommendations will be forwarded to the University of Tennessee Board of Trustees and the Tennessee Board of Regents for consideration. Both boards meet later this month.

Staff will be prepared to answer questions and comments at the meeting beginning at 9:00 a.m. (CDT) in the THEC offices, 19th floor of Parkway Towers.